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Pragmatic Approaches to Drama

*Studies in Communication
on the Ancient Stage*

Edited by

Gunther Martin
Federica Iurescia
Severin Hof
Giada Sorrentino



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Introduction

Gunther Martin, Federica Iurescia, Severin Hof, and Giada Sorrentino

1 Preliminaries

This book assembles selected papers from a conference entitled *Doing things with words on stage. Pragmatics and its use in ancient drama*, which was held at the University of Zurich from 4th to 7th July 2018.* The conference brought together scholars who, in their work, use the heuristic potential of interpersonal pragmatics, i.e. the systematic and theoretically informed study of communicative interaction.¹ Rather than following a single approach or creating a uniform picture of the objects and objectives of pragmatic analysis, however, their contributions illustrate the breadth of the discipline and show the many different forms that engagement with the pragmatic dimension of literary texts can take: from the force that a single word can have in referring to its intra- and extratextual context to the back and forth in conversations; from the purely linguistic resources of communication to the interplay of verbal and non-verbal forms of interaction and to the grounding of communicative acts in social structures and norms of conduct. In other words, this volume offers a panoramic view that illustrates the continuum of pragmatic phenomena by which meaning is constructed: from lingual to non-lingual forms of interaction, or as it were, from 'doing things with words' to 'making statements without words'. As each author contributes their unique perspective, this volume demonstrates the different opportunities that pragmatic work on interaction in literature affords, and it aims to stimulate the exchange between the different branches of pragmatics to create synergies and thereby further advance the study of the field.

While the pragmatic approaches that the authors take may be diverse, they all tackle the same literary medium: drama. In that way the papers deal with a

* The Swiss National Science Foundation provided generous funding for the conference and the research projects in the course of which this volume was prepared (PP00P1_157444 and PP00P1_183707). For help with the preparation of the manuscript the editors are indebted to Alexander Herren.

1 Since its inception in the first half of the 20th century, the exact nature and definition of pragmatics has been much discussed. The two branches this volume is mainly concerned with are pragmlinguistics, which received its first major impulse by Austin (1975), and the pragmatics of communication, as founded by Watzlawick et al. (1967). The lack of mutual recognisance between these two approaches has often been lamented, e.g. by Mey (2001: 69).

comparable set of parameters and similar characteristics of the representation of communication. The choice of ancient comedies and tragedies as the corpus of pragmatic studies is a natural one. For drama is a mimetic and performative art form, and as such it endows interaction with a privileged position. At least among the poetic genres, there is no other in which it is represented in the same concentrated and unfiltered way: not only do dramatic texts consist to a large extent of interaction, both verbal and physical; they are, moreover, characterised by the absence of an intermediary voice. For example, narrators in epic can explain situations and actions of their characters. They can even report and assess the characters' thoughts and motives from a privileged vantage point. In so doing they guide the readers' perception and interpretation. In drama, these options do not exist: the information that the spectators or readers need in order to make sense of the plot is conveyed almost exclusively on the intra-dramatic level or 'internal system of communication'.² The burden of giving a sufficient amount of clues about the characters' dispositions, thoughts, and manner of execution of (speech-)acts rests entirely on their shoulders. *What* the characters say, and in equal measure *how* they say it and how they interact with each other, becomes the source of all our knowledge about the dramatic world. What is more, since we do not have stage directions or other external information about the performative side of the plays, the characters' speech is all we can rely on: even their own gestures and movements as well as their meaning can only be gauged from the indications the characters give verbally about what they do and what it signifies.

What the characters convey about the world of each drama and the people that populate it is still plenty. Far from letting us know only about their identity, they also provide rich insight into who they are, i.e. which character type they belong to and also what makes them unique as individuals.³ On the one hand, they act as representatives of groups: old vs young, male vs female, dominant vs powerless, hero vs villain, etc., and both their behaviour as such and their conduct towards others helps, in its pragmatic aspects, to reaffirm their belonging to these types. We see, moreover, how interaction enacts typical patterns of communication. These can be types of 'scripts', i.e. standard situations that

2 For the concept see Pfister (1988: 3, 40–41). The exception are some prologue speakers in comedy, who as *πρόσωπα προτατικά* or 'real-life' characters breach the fourth wall. Messengers can also engage in some limited mind-reading, but they do so strictly as intra-dramatic characters (see de Jong 1991).

3 The degree to which individualisation is achieved or even attempted has of course been the matter of an old debate: on the Greek side cf. e.g. Gould (1978); Easterling (1990); Gill (1990); Budelmann and Easterling (2010); see the substantial volume by De Temmerman and van Emde Boas (2018a) and the recent dissertation by Rodríguez-Piedrabuena (2019). For Roman drama cf. Dupont (1998) and Faure-Ribreau (2012).

recur in very similar fashion and follow an identifiable (though often informal) protocol, such as introductions and recognitions; they can also concern the typical conduct in certain kinds of rapport, e.g. subordination or confrontation. The dialogue thus contributes to the establishing, shaping, and changing of the relationships between the speakers, wherein each interaction has the potential to foster, destroy, or alter the nature of such relationships.

On the other hand, the text of the plays also gives the dramatic situation and the interaction of the various *personae* an individual touch. The way in which the latter act with words, gestures, movements, and so forth distinguishes the individual instance from a ritualised staple scene: it can, for example, illustrate the specific frictions and struggles of the characters in an *agon* scene—beyond the issues of the disputed matter; in a scene of counsel, it can cast light on the relationship of the characters and their attitudes to the advice and each other: whether, for instance, the advisor/advisee relationship resembles that between father and son, teacher and disciple, or warner and recalcitrant tyrant.

On account of the specific way in which information is distributed in drama, pragmatic approaches have proven immensely fertile for the study of tragedy and comedy. Elements of pragmatic analysis *avant* (or *sans*) *la lettre* have long been floating around.⁴ Early ventures into pragmatic theory were first combined with rhetorical elements (see Battezzato 2000). In a volume on *Sophocles and the Greek Language* (de Jong and Rijksbaron 2006) pragmatics features as part of a triad of linguistic aspects, together with diction and syntax. The last few years have seen a flourish of studies on drama that were firmly rooted in pragmatic theory.⁵ The innovative approaches that pragmatics has brought to the field have thus led to considerable progress in our understanding of drama as such and of individual plays. The system by which they explain behaviour in communication has laid the foundations for a more pervasive and strongly conceptualised description of what ‘happens’ or ‘is done’ in and through a text.

The result—from a literary point of view—is a more solid footing of interpretation and an approach to a methodology to test earlier descriptions of interaction. Moreover, new criteria emerge by which we can describe and measure interactional behaviour and compare particular characters within a play or even the same or similar characters across plays. Pragmatic approaches

4 E.g. Schwinge (1968); Ireland (1974); Mastronarde (1979); Turner (1980); Pfeiffer-Petersen (1996); Rutherford (2012) essentially still does not use the pragmatic framework. For a synopsis of works on Latin literature, see Ricottilli (2009).

5 Sorrentino (2013); Schuren (2015); Barrios-Lech (2016); Unceta Gómez (2016); van Emde Boas (2017); Ricottilli (2018); Iurescia (2019).

demonstrate by means of clear criteria and on the basis of a consistent model—rather than by nit-picking scattered details—how speakers exhibit uncooperative or impolite behaviour and how they search to find common ground with their addressee or employ techniques of dominating the discussion with their partner. In essence, pragmatics permits us to detect and describe dramatic techniques and how they are employed—and thereby to extend the concept that Fraenkel has called the ‘grammar of dramatic technique’ (1950: 11305).

The interpretations that pragmatic studies have produced do, however, come with two important caveats:

Firstly, they treat dramatic characters as agents that are not just black boxes but endowed with a character and mental abilities that manifest themselves in the characters’ (inter-)actions. The characters react—or are interpreted as reacting—to each other and adapt to what they assume to be the other’s thoughts and intentions. Thus, there is a layered process of ‘theory of mind’ going on: on the one hand, we as recipients try to explore what is going on in the characters’ minds and ascribe feelings and other cognitive processes to them that we extrapolate from words (both content and pragmatics) and gestures (see in particular Easterling 1990); we construct ‘realistic’, i.e. understandable and believable, personalities out of what we hear and see from the *personae*. On the other hand, we ascribe to the characters the same mental processes with regard to their interactants—we read their minds reading each other’s minds. This is not a case of the number of Lady Macbeth’s children; instead, it has a fundamental impact on the ‘sense’ we make of a piece of literature: whether we construct such a sense by forming a coherent picture from all the actions and utterances of a character or whether we take every play scene by scene or even sentence by sentence, without looking behind the actor’s mask and trying to draw conclusions for the character (see most recently De Temmerman and van Emde Boas 2018b: 11–19).

Perhaps even more pressing is another caveat concerning pragmatic analysis of literature: that it presupposes—with varying degrees of strictness and awareness—that principles of the ‘real life’ can be transferred to the study of literary texts. In order to address this problem, pragmatics-based work on drama has fostered theoretical and methodological reflection. One of the main branches of the ‘pragmatics of fiction’ (see Locher and Jucker 2017) deals very generally with the applicability of pragmatics to fictional and scripted representation of speech. There is a general willingness to accept the validity of pragmatic phenomena in literary texts (e.g. Pilkington 1991, 2000; Sperber and Wilson 1995: 231–237; Wilson 2011), including dramatic texts (Hess-Lüttich 1981; Petrey 1990; Herman 1995; Leech and Short 2007). For ancient drama specific-

ally, this question has not been discussed extensively. However, Ricottilli (2010) emphasises that drama goes far into imitating the practices of real-life interaction, and Schuren (2015: 11–49) offers a differentiated view of the naturalism of one of the most formalised elements of tragedy: stichomythia. She argues that, while that format may be reductionist in some aspects, in others it concurs with real dialogues. We may add that, as a consequence, the latter can still be analysed by means of pragmatic parameters: we can look for turn-allocating mechanisms and interpret the degree of co-operation, or we can rearrange lines from the order in which they have been transmitted on the basis that this leads to greater coherence. Ultimately, this procedure means little more than taking the mimetic character of ancient drama seriously. In that sense, the instruments of pragmatics can be legitimately and profitably applied to dramatic dialogue. At the same time, it has never been contentious that dramatic language has an artificial, literary character, be it the penchant for the grotesque and coarse in Aristophanes and Plautus, be it the ‘high style’ in tragedy, which is distinctive enough for comedy to parody. This artificiality of literary language, specifically tragic language, and its distance from the registers of ‘regular’ language pose specific difficulties for the analysis of pragmatic phenomena. Literature in general, and individual genres in particular, carry their own frame of reference, their specific audience expectations, something that may be explained, for example, as shifting the scale of relevance (Uchida 1998; Giltrow 2017; for Greek tragedy now Willi 2019). Hence, it is crucial to identify the degree to which ‘principles, norms and conventions of use which underlie spontaneous communication in everyday life are precisely those which are exploited and manipulated by dramatists in their constructions of speech types and forms in plays’ (Herman 1995: 6). In other words, we must try to find out where literature starts developing its own conventions that are recognised and understood by the audience and that can be exploited. This is especially the case in genres such as tragedy and comedy, which show a high degree of formalisation of both language and gestures, such as the already mentioned stichomythia or the rather strict rules that apply to characters’ weeping (see e.g. Telò 2002).

Once we undertake to reflect on the particular frame in which dramatic interaction articulates itself, we can start to reassess the potential scope of use of pragmatics. We may then hope to distinguish between, on the one hand, universals (be it the theoretical background of philosophical linguistics à la Grice or the ethnomethodological approach of conversational analysis) that can be applied to a set of literary texts and, on the other hand, factors that manifest themselves in a deviant way in literature. For example, while the mechanisms of im/politeness (Brown and Levinson ²1987 as well as more recent approaches: Watts 2003; Terkourafi 2005; Culpeper 2011) are still in place (see Lloyd 2006;

van Emde Boas 2017: 31–39; Berger 2017), what counts as im/politeness or over-politeness must be inferred or even negotiated anew when we approach drama. For, the cosmos of tragedy and that of comedy demonstrate very different standards in the formality or coarseness of their language. The problem may be even more acute when generic conventions clash with pragmatic indicators: is an interruption of the interlocutor's turn in *stichomythia* to be read pragmatically or is it merely a consequence (void of meaning) of the dramatic form, which constrains a speaker's turn to one line—or can it be both at the same time? What distinguishes an interruption from an *aposiopesis*, and what does that distinction mean for the understanding of the ongoing interaction? With answers to questions like these, we may ultimately not only define the applicability of pragmatic principles but simultaneously make a judgement about the interpretability of a feature of the text. The judgements on pragmatic principles and those on the defining elements of genre condition each other and demarcate each other's realms. In order to use the full potential of a pragmatic approach to ancient drama, we need to remind ourselves constantly about these two realms and the fact that the line between them is often arguable and potentially subjective.

2 Outline of the Volume

The papers in this volume address the issues raised above, each in its own way and with its own focus. However, focal points of interest do emerge, which are mirrored in the structure of this book: the force of language in communication; more specifically, questions of politeness; and the fringes of language and its interplay with non-verbal means of communication. Several contributions also address the points of contact of pragmatics with other fields and the potential of synergies, and they form the core of the last paper, on the old question of the relationship between pragmatics and rhetoric.

2.1 *Part 1: Verbal Communication I—Doing Things with Words*

The first part illustrates different levels on which and different ways in which the pragmatic potential of language transcends its semantic or syntactic value. The first contributions deal with the micro-level of language, namely structural words and addresses. In themselves, these elements of language do not seem to carry much weight; in specific contexts, however, they assume qualities or connotations that create an added layer of meaning or position the message in the wider communicative situation, making a point about the utterance itself, the wider conversation, or the relationship between the speakers.

Regarding the contemplation of the macro-level, Conversation Analysis (CA) takes a prominent role borne out in several contributions: the organisation of dialogue is viewed as a sequence of turns forming larger units. Through the construction of adjacency pairs of related utterances (e.g. question-answer), interlocutors become partners whose co-operation, or lack thereof, is analysable and helps grasp conversational behaviour.

The tools of pragmatic analysis that are introduced in this part all bear an obvious relationship to aspects such as characterisation and motivation of action. As such, they have a direct impact on our understanding of the literary meaning of the texts. This potential of pragmatics is explored with greater focus on literary interpretation in the second half of this part.

Anna Bonifazi demonstrates by the example of αὐτός and (ἐ)κεῖνος how even inconspicuous deictics can be connected with cognitive operations and then charged with implied meaning that makes them more than just anaphoric markers. The aspects thus signposted include the connection to the visual or corporeal, distance, or identity; when clustered, deictics may even create a resonance effect. The conclusion she offers is that structural words are not chosen out of metrical convenience but must be considered with their full range of context-specific connotations.

The interaction between characters comes more into view in Rutger Allan's study of the particles δῆ and τοι in tragedy. By drawing on the concept of common ground, he accomplishes a more comprehensive account of their function and effect, which reconciles earlier competing explanations of their use: both particles serve as grounding devices, i.e. they put the information in relation with knowledge, notions, or attitudes that are shared, or presumed to be shared, between the interlocutors. They differ in the degree to which the speaker assumes the hearer is aware of this information being inside the common ground.

While forms of address have long been established as a fruitful area of research, the position of addresses within a sentence is shown by Sandra Rodríguez-Piedrabuena to be an underestimated carrier of pragmatic significance in Greek drama. She focuses on the right periphery, i.e. addresses at the end of sentences, and carves out the specific patterns and effects this placement of the address has by correlating their frequency with parameters such as speech acts, type of term of address, and social status. As a result of the analysis, the position of a term of address emerges as an important pragmatic factor along with the lexis and the frequency or omission of addresses.

The particular contribution of pragmatics to the analysis of dramatic characters and their minds is discussed by Evert van Emde Boas. He argues that through the study of 'mind style', the distinctive linguistic representation of a

mental self, it becomes possible to extrapolate that self and thereby to assess its individuality as projected by the author. Van Emde Boas exemplifies the methods and the potential of this approach by reference to the protagonist of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*. From the analysis of pragmatic aspects of his linguistic behaviour Oedipus emerges as a character distinguished by a particular style that highlights his inquisitiveness, which in turn mirrors his mental qualities of intelligence and distrust.

Severin Hof draws on resonance theory in order to explore what the dialogic character of the prologue of Sophocles' *Ajax* contributes to the play. He studies how each utterance is interwoven into the tissue of dialogue and how it has its meaning enriched by the echoes and resumptions of the other speaker's turns. By reading Athena's and Odysseus' parts against each other, we can gauge the differences in their predispositions and mindsets, which create a friction of different perspectives that will continue in different constellations throughout the play.

The development of the confrontation between Pentheus and Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae* is traced by Camille Semenzato. With reference to CA concepts, she diagnoses the different misunderstandings that occur (or are deliberately produced) between the two characters. Patterns of coherence manifest, on a linguistic level, the shifting relationship and the distribution of control. Differences of knowledge thus turn into differences of linguistic competence, and Pentheus' limitations in this regard contribute to his downfall.

Finally, Giada Sorrentino draws a contrastive characterisation of Iphigenia and Clytaemestra in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*, using speech acts, im/politeness theory, floor management, and other CA tools. She shows how the two dramatic figures are consistently opposed in their conversational behaviour, even transcending the change in their personal characters as a result of the major plot turn. In this way, not only does that opposition define them against each other, but it also makes tangible the antithetical shift in control over the course of events that the revelation of Iphigenia's fate brings. The characters' linguistic conduct in dialogue and the emphasis on the difference between them becomes both a window into the inner self of the two women and a means to elaborate Iphigenia's self-empowerment.

2.2 *Part 2: Verbal Communication 11—Being More or Less Kind with Words*

Part 2 deals specifically with im/politeness, an aspect of pragmalinguistics that has received a great amount of attention in Classical Studies over the last decade. The phenomenon had originally been couched in terms of Face

Threatening Acts (FTAs) that could either infringe on someone's self-image (positive face) or their freedom of action (negative face). Politeness then consists, according to this approach, in the avoidance of face-threats through, for example, expressions of respect or mitigating devices. The papers in this volume partly expand on this theoretical framework and partly look at more recent developments. Extensive use is made of the seminal work by Watts (2003) that moves away (in the so-called discursive approach) from the analyst's perspective, which considers abstract mechanisms and assigns to them the character of im/politeness. Watts proposes to complement this approach (which he terms second-order politeness) with the consideration of how the interactants qualify utterances as im/polite (first-order politeness). The focus shifts to the relativity of what is perceived as polite and to the importance of contextual factors. This combination of two dimensions of politeness opens new alleys of investigation: it brings to the fore both the specificities of the culture and the language as well as the principles of operation that are shared across language communities. One aim of recent studies in im/politeness has accordingly been to give historical depth to the study of politeness phenomena, and to highlight the difficulties of polite behaviour in different cultures and in cross-cultural communication (cf. Watts 2010; Maha 2014). The contributions in this part that deal with Greek and Roman comedy similarly expand the analysis of their corpus by exploring the advances that can be made by the recent developments in politeness studies.

First, however, Luigi Battezzato explores the compatibility of politeness in the sense of Brown and Levinson with cognitive approaches (theory of mind and theory of possible worlds). He uses as a test case a paradoxical comment Tiresias makes in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*: by stating that he had said what he had come to say, the seer seems to contradict the content of the preceding conversation. As Battezzato argues, the three approaches unite to open up new readings and create a sense in Tiresias' quizzical remark: politeness is a mechanism active on the local level of the text, while the cognitive approaches help to understand the general mindset with which the seer approaches the scene. If read in this sense, the dialogue between Oedipus and Tiresias as well as the latter's behaviour in it offer an important contribution to Tiresias' characterisation.

Positive face-threats and their avoidance are discussed by Michael Lloyd, who demonstrates the limits of the traditional model: a model that ascribes an absolute effect to certain types of expressions, such as Brown and Levinson's, strongly correlates semantic value and impact on politeness. Lloyd questions this connection by reference to terms of endearment in Aristophanes. He shows how these terms, which would traditionally be considered positive face-

work, can be bereft of any such effect and, in fact, even turn into over-politeness and thus FTAs. By demonstrating how the two conceptions and levels of politeness jar he makes the advantages of adopting Watts' approach in the interpretation of the text clear. He brings into play the parameters of distance and power, which influence the perception of terms of endearment—and he raises 'the question whether there is more to politeness than hypocrisy' (this volume, p. 231).

Relativity of politeness, this time from a diachronic perspective, is also the subject of Peter Barrios-Lech's contribution, which investigates aspects of the politeness system between the fifth and the third centuries BCE. In so doing he advances work on Greek politeness by adopting a diachronic approach, as is frequently practised with modern languages (for English cf. e.g. Jucker and Taavitsainen 2008). He traces the use of directives and softening devices in dialogue-centred genres and highlights the continuities and differences that exist in comedy, prose dialogue, and mime: both the ratio of softened to unsoftened directives and the relative frequency of individual softeners are largely stable across the texts of the corpus, independent of the social and political environment. Only mime exhibits deviant patterns. The result is even more significant when compared to Roman comedy, where the figures differ and thus indicate the cultural specificity of the Greek politeness system.

Łukasz Berger looks at the pragmatics of offering advice in Roman comedy and proposes a new framework of analysis. Going beyond the analysis of single speech acts and turns, he treats advice as a multi-act move in which different factors have to be equilibrated to ensure the acceptability of the move and avoid intrusiveness: the choice of the sub-type of directive speech-act and politeness devices must be dovetailed with contextual (social) factors to form a complex but effective operation. In addition, Berger demonstrates that the sequence in which the elements are arranged also has an impact on whether advice is welcome, and how redressive action can be taken into the middle of the exchange to accommodate the advisees' face wants.

Over-politeness employed by characters of low social rank in Roman comedy is the subject of Luis Unceta-Gómez' paper. As he demonstrates, the communicative strategies of parasites and *meretrices* entail heavy use of devices to enhance the positive face of the people they depend on. Their use is interpreted as both conscious and insincere: they are means employed to gain a certain personal advantage, but at the same time they appear to be accepted norm for the respective classes. These observations make a strong case for the social determination of felicitousness in Roman comedy of forms of face-work.

2.3 *Part 3: Verbal and Non-verbal Communication—Doing Things Not Just with Words*

While our knowledge of individual plays does not go far beyond their text, the communicative interaction between the characters does not stop at their use of language. On the contrary, even the decision not to speak can convey information and create meaning in a pragmatic way. Moreover, the deployment of gestures adds a vital layer to our understanding of relationships and social operations, especially in the performative genres of drama. However, much of the characters' non-verbal behaviour—certainly the part authors wanted to have preserved for future performances—is captured and can be inferred from the text, as gestures and other physical actions are regularly verbalised, i.e. re-deployed in the medium of language. The gestures are not simply the extension of language but equivalent as a means of expression and communication; or rather, they can be read in analogy to speech acts, serving the same function, albeit in a different medium. As such, they follow their own pragmatic play-book and can interplay with the verbal forms of communication.

Silence is a special case of linguistic action and takes us to the borderline between verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Vanessa Zetzmann deals with cases in which a character in Greek tragedy stays silent. She distinguishes between different types of infelicity in conversation that such a silence can signal. Some cases can be read as speech acts through denial to speak and hence as a dis-preferred response. The subsequent prompts to answer (i.e. questions of the type τί σιγᾷς;) are interpreted as relational markers: they are pragmaticalised signs that indicate a mental operation—the formation of a theory of mind—initiating a new attempt at persuasion. These attempts, however, regularly fail.

The interplay of language and gesture and their respective function in communication is conceptualised by Matteo Capponi. He emphasises the parallelism and the equivalence of words and gestures and the need for a 'unitary' analysis: gestures and verbal dialogue unite to spell out the meaning of the action. The expressive force and the pragmatic importance of this combination is then exemplified with reference to the recognition scenes of Sophocles' and Euripides' *Electrae*: these plays show very different patterns of gesticulation, which results in a shift of the expressive dynamics in the symbolic 'language' of the physical performance.

The boundaries between words and gestures are the subject also of the contribution by Licinia Ricottilli, who deals with the question how gestures may be interpreted in terms of Pragmatics of Communication. Drawing on her previous work on gestures in the *Aeneid*, she provides a definition of gesture as bodily or facial behaviour that takes on communicative, informative, or interactive value. In her paper, she applies this definition in order to study gestures,

especially movements of the head, in Terence's comedies. Her analysis underscores the importance of gestures in the communication between Terence and his audience and retrieves the emic specificities of certain gestures in Roman culture. Ultimately, we see how this shared knowledge is harnessed to create comic effects and adds further details to the relationships between characters.

Ricottilli's definition of gestures also provides the methodological framework of Renata Raccanelli's and Evita Calabrese's papers, who each focus on a specific kind of gesture: kisses and tears respectively. More specifically, Raccanelli offers a reading of Plautus' *Stichus* as a case-study to demonstrate the culture-specific significance of the kiss. She argues that the kiss between father and daughter can only be thoroughly understood when placed in its proper Roman context: not only does a kiss between relatives serve as a ritual of greeting, but it is embedded in the practice of male social control over the *pudicitia* of female relatives.

Calabrese's contribution discusses gestures that have an impact on human interactions, focussing on Seneca's tragedies. Gestures related to countenance enable interactants to manage their personal relations on a one-to-one level. More specifically, Calabrese shows how one type of gesture, namely female tears, is used to negotiate and calibrate the relationship between an individual and the community or to deceive.

Strategies of deception in tragic dialogues are also explored by Lavinia Scolari, who is interested in how gestures and words concur in attempts to deceive an interlocutor. In a bottom-up approach, she provides a definition of *fraus*, tracking the vocabulary and the emic representation of deception in Seneca's tragic dialogues. Through a combination of pragmatic, dramaturgical, and anthropological approaches, she identifies the main features of successful deception in Seneca's *Troades* and *Thyestes*.

2.4 *Epilogue*

The last contribution looks at the notoriously difficult relationship between pragmatics and rhetoric. Almost from its inception on, pragmatics as a discipline has had to defend its position against the claim that it was as a mere subset of the ancient art of speaking. Looking back at the long discussion about the distinction between the two fields, Carlo Scardino instead makes the case that these two approaches are in fact complementary. The mutual fostering of the disciplines is exemplified by the Fourth Epeisodion of Euripides' *Orestes*. United, they allow a more thorough exploration of the ideas and emotions that are conveyed, Scardino argues, especially under the performative conditions of the stage: for tragedy moves between the poles of conformance with natural

language and the demands of a *Kunstsprache*, both of which are harnessed by the poets to shape our understanding of the fictional world.

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